



Testimony to the Energy and Technology Committee

Submitted by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut

March 8, 2012

In Opposition to Senate Bill 332, An Act Concerning Utility Service Termination and the Appointment of a Receiver

LeadingAge Connecticut is a membership organization representing over 130 mission-driven and not-for-profit provider organizations serving older adults across the continuum of long term care including nursing homes. (LeadingAge Connecticut was formerly named the *Connecticut Association of Not-for-profit Providers for the Aging or CANPFA*.) Our members are sponsored by religious, fraternal, community, and municipal organizations that are committed to providing quality care and services to their residents and clients. Our member organizations, many of which have served their communities for generations, are dedicated to expanding the world of possibilities for aging.

On behalf of LeadingAge Connecticut, I would like to submit the following testimony in opposition to *Senate Bill 332, An Act Concerning Utility Service Termination and the Appointment of a Receiver*.

LeadingAge Connecticut is opposed to this bill which would allow for a utility company to seek a receiver to intercept per diem nursing home payments from or on behalf of a nursing home resident when a nursing home is in default of their utility payments. The bill further proposes to allow the utility to terminate service to those residents if the petition for receiver is denied. We are very concerned with the ramifications of this type of legal procedure and utility termination on frail nursing home residents.

The fact that there was a perceived need to raise this bill concerns us and we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the issue with the utility companies. LeadingAge Connecticut is not aware of any particular situation where a nursing home is currently in default with a utility company, but we are aware of the growing financial crisis within the field that has restricted cash flow for every nursing home that is caring for residents who are applying for Medicaid coverage. That crisis is being caused by excessive delays in the Medicaid eligibility process. The state's Medicaid eligibility system is grinding to a halt and as a consequence, nursing home providers are owed millions of dollars from the state. We are urging the legislature to work quickly with the administration to address these excessive delays in the Medicaid eligibility process. This crisis simply cannot wait and needs immediate attention.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit this testimony.

Respectfully submitted by Mag Morelli, President, LeadingAge Connecticut

LeadingAge Connecticut, 1340 Worthington Ridge, Berlin, CT 06037 (860)828-2903 mmorelli@leadingagect.org